

their second or third tours of duty, and approximately 95 percent of the Army National Guard's combat battalions and special operation units have been mobilized since 9/11, and short of full mobilization or a new presidential declaration of national emergency, there is little available combat capacity remaining in the Army National Guard.

All active duty Marine Corps units are being used on tight, tight rotation schedules, 7 months deployed, less than a year home to rest or recess, then another 7 months deployed, and all of the Marine Reserve combat units have been mobilized.

The point I am making is that the decision to go to war is one thing. The other thing is you never make that decision and you send on a mission that is not clearly defined, that has been moving and shaking. Let us review for a moment just what our soldiers, just what our military has been asked to do.

First of all, the mission was to go and find weapons of mass destruction, based upon faulty information and sometimes false information purposefully, for whatever purpose. We know all that now. We did not know it then, but we sent our military into that, and we sent our military in with not enough manpower. Seventy percent of the generals said we do not have enough manpower. The one person with the level of credibility, combat experience in this administration, Colin Powell, made the statement, We do not go to war without the size of the military we need to do the job. You go with massive force.

Then secondly, once there were no weapons of mass destruction, the mission changed to go to find Saddam Hussein. We did that.

Then to set up a free government. We did that, all under great, great obstacles.

And then the test, to reconstruct the country. That was not the mission of our Army.

So, as we sit back and as we applaud this great accomplishment today with al-Zarqawi, let us not forget the soldier. Let us not forget the difficult and challenging and meandering, constantly changing mission, not having the resources, going into dung heaps, going into landfills to get body armor.

This country, and the very just passionate story that STEVE ISRAEL talked about on the front page of the *Newsday* and the *Long Island newspaper* today, America deserves better. I tell you one thing, they are going to get better because we in the Democratic group on national security, we are going to make sure of it. We are going to hold this administration accountable. We are going to point in a new direction, and we are going to give the American people the kind of strong, forceful, national security that they need and can be proud of.

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Georgia.

I think most of the American people really do not have a firsthand sense of

the kind of sacrifice that our troops are making, which is nothing short of extraordinary, with the multiple deployments that you mentioned, with the uncertainty for their families of when they will come home, if they will come home and in what condition they will come home, the economic sacrifices the families make.

One of the concerns I have is not only the problem making sure that there is enough coagulant bandages while they are there, but what about when they come home? Our VA system is already over capacity. The administration is talking about closing Walter Reed. I do not know how that can be done. Every time I have been there it is been brimming with patients.

We, I do not think, have even begun to think about the demands on our health care system for veterans. This young Guardsman that I mentioned earlier, he told me that he still has to resist the impulse to drop to the deck when he hears someone close the door behind a Civic. There is something about the closing of a door behind a Civic that sounds a lot like a mortar going off at 2,000 meters. He said he was pretty well-off in Iraq; he was not one of the people who had to bust down doors every day and go through that kind of stress.

Imagine the mental health care needs, the physical health care needs. I do not think we are prepared yet to meet them, and I want to ask my colleague from New York, a member of the Armed Services Committee, someone who is a military historian and studied the kind of strain we are placing on our active duty and our reserve, what are your thoughts on this subject?

Mr. ISRAEL. Well, I thank the gentleman for the question. You know, every Member of Congress prides themselves on the work we do with respect to veterans case work. I know in my district we have two people devoted exclusively to trying to work with veterans, get them their retroactive payment, get them their medals.

We secured over \$2 million in my district in back payments for our veterans, but those are Vietnam veterans. Some of these are World War II veterans, Korean veterans. This country is just now catching up to people who were in the military theater 40 years ago. Just catching up now to those people.

Can you imagine what our situation is going to be where we now have a multitude, a new generation of veterans coming back with post-traumatic stress disorder and other very serious physical and psychological problems, and we have to say to them we are sorry, we know we sent you to the front, but now we have got to balance the budget on your backs because we have run out of money? Just cannot do it as a result of the fiscal policy of the past 6 years.

When the gentleman and I were elected, we had a \$5.6 trillion surplus. We

could have paid for the war in Iraq and then paid for health care for every single soldier that went, so that they did not have to go without the potential of coagulant bandages. So when they came home, they came home to a country that would take care of them.

Now, we have got an \$8 trillion debt, and we have to make painful cuts. The other side has forced us to cut back on those services, forced veterans to dig deeper into their pockets.

Mr. SCHIFF. The gentleman and I were talking just this morning, all three of us, about the need to sacrifice, the need to have leadership in this country, and ask the American people to make a sacrifice.

Right now, the people sacrificing are the people in uniform and their families, but the rest of us can contribute, too. I know you have been at the forefront of calling for our national sacrifice, and we could start by balancing the budget so that these young soldiers, sailors, marines and airmen do not come back, in addition to having to try to put their lives back together, have that huge national debt hanging over their heads.

Mr. ISRAEL. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman would yield, there is a lot of talk by the administration about the global war on terror and America's fight on the global war on terror. 133,000 of our troops are fighting the global war on terror. They are the ones who have been made to engage in the sacrifice. They are the ones who have been uprooted from their families.

These two gentlemen on the front page of my daily newspaper, they are fighting the global war on terror. The rest of us are watching it on television. America can do better than that. I refuse, and I know the gentleman from California and the gentleman from Georgia should refuse to be the first generation of Americans in history to say let everybody else do it, we will just sit back and relax. We will pass a permanent repeal of the death tax or the estate tax which may cost \$300 billion, and then have the temerity to tell these people on the front page of *Newsday*, sorry, we cannot afford your supplies, we cannot afford to take care of you when you come home. I do not want to be the first generation of Americans to balance the budget on the backs of someone who is on his back in this photograph.

We have an obligation if we are going to fight the Zarqawis of the world, something I believe we should do, to make sure that those who are doing the fighting are protected and make sacrifices at home that save their lives abroad.

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I have to yield to the gentleman from Georgia.

Mr. SCOTT of Georgia. That is exactly the point we were making earlier in the debate early last week in terms of these tax cuts. I mean, we are here and this administration last week